

MANKATO LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT



*Native American dancer at the Mahkato Wacipi Powwow in Land of Memories Park, 300 Amos Owen Lane.
Photo by David Clobes.*

HEALING AND RECONCILIATION EFFORTS

Over the last 40+ years, the Dakota Peoples, City of Mankato and community members have made great strides toward healing, reconciliation efforts and partnerships, which include:

Adoption of Indigenous Peoples Day

The Mankato City Council adopted a resolution recognizing the second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples Day in the City of Mankato, taking another step on the path of reconciliation between the Indigenous Dakota Nation and Mankato community members.

Annual Mahkato Wacipi Powwow in Land of Memories Park honoring the 38+2 Dakota

Since 1972 the City has partnered with the Mdewakanton Association to provide space, facilities and camping sites for the annual Mahkato Wacipi Powwow (dance). In 1980, the City designated a park site named by the Dakota people as "Dakota Wokiksuye Makoce Park" (Land of Memories Park) for the Mahkato (earth blue) Wacipi.

Within the park is also a permanent steel arbor painted yellow, red, black and white, colors that hold specific significance for the Dakota community. To further highlight the importance of the Powwow, the Mankato Silo Art features a child dancing at the Powwow. This site is seen by the Dakota as an area where many ceremonies and gatherings took place prior to the 1862 U.S.-Dakota Conflict.



Native American dancer at the Mahkato Wacipi Powwow in Land of Memories Park. Photo by David Clobes.

Dakota Wokiksuye Memorial Ride and Memorial Relay Run

The annual Dakota Wokiksuye Memorial Ride from South Dakota to Mankato and Memorial Relay Run between Fort Snelling and Mankato both begin in early December. They end at Reconciliation Park, 100 North Riverfront Drive, each December 26. These events serve as a message of remembrance, healing and understanding.

Reconciliation Park

Dedicated in 1997, the park includes a limestone buffalo, which symbolizes the spiritual survival of the Dakota People and honors their heritage.

In 2012, a 10-foot-by-four-foot scroll listing the names of the 38+2 Dakota men executed in 1862 was dedicated in the park. In the future, a moccasin sculpture will be installed in the park upon its completion.



Reconciliation Park, 100 North Riverfront Drive.

WHAT IS A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT?

According to the Native American Council, "A land acknowledgment is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous People and their traditional territories."

Land acknowledgements are generally a starting point to recognize and support Indigenous communities. The City of Mankato is long past that starting point and has woven equity and diversity throughout its Strategic Plan. The collaborative work done thus far shows the commitment by the City to the ongoing partnership and collaboration with tribal communities, moving in a spirit of reconciliation; and advocating and promoting practices that honor Indigenous roots, history and contributions. The groundwork has already been laid and actions taken. The land acknowledgement furthers these efforts.

The U.S. Department of Arts and Culture notes that acknowledgment by itself is a small gesture. It becomes meaningful when coupled with authentic relationship and informed action. But this beginning can be an opening to greater public consciousness of Native sovereignty and cultural rights, a step toward equitable relationship and reconciliation.

MANKATO LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that we live and thrive in Mahkato (mah-KAH-toh), the traditional homeland of the Dakota (dah-KO-tah) Nation and other Indigenous Peoples. The land we are on holds significance as a cultural and spiritual place for the Dakota Peoples and connects to their vibrant cultures, traditions and ways of life.

We recognize this land was forcibly taken by the U.S. government and acknowledge the deliberate actions of generations that came before us to suppress Indigenous Peoples cultural and spiritual heritage. We also recognize the displacement and exile of the Dakota Peoples and the execution of 38+2 Dakota men.

We honor and respect the ongoing work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous People towards reconciliation efforts in Mahkato, especially Dakota Elder Amos Owen and Mahkato residents Bud Lawrence and Jim Buckley Sr.

We remain committed to moving in a spirit of reconciliation and accountability by offering this land acknowledgement and continuing to:

- Partner, collaborate and maintain relationships with Indigenous communities.
- Embrace Indigenous Peoples past, present and future contributions.
- Provide space for traditional and contemporary cultural activities.
- Review policies that impact Indigenous Peoples.

This land acknowledgement will serve as a living document to be reviewed and updated.

WHEN TO USE THE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Land acknowledgements are often given generally before a public meeting, events, celebrations and activities as a way to welcome attendees and recognize the history of the land where the event is occurring. Land acknowledgements may also be used in print and online materials.

The City of Mankato will seek opportunities to display and read the land acknowledgement so that the public has an opportunity to see and hear the statement. The land acknowledgement will be read at annual public City meetings and at other times when a reading is warranted, such as part of an agenda topic. Mankato's Land Acknowledgement Statement is encouraged to be used by the community, businesses and other groups.

PRONUNCIATION AND DEFINITIONS

Dakota (dah-KO-tah)

Ally or friend

Mahkato (mah - kah - toh)

Earth blue

Mní Sota Makoce (mnee shoh-dah mah-koh-chay)

Land where the waters reflect the skies

Wacipi (wah-CHEE-pee)

Powwow, a traditional Native American celebration

Wokiksuye (woh - kee - ksue - yea)

Remembrance



At Mahkato Wacipi Powwow in Land of Memories Park. Photo by David Clobes.

CREATED BY:

- David Brave Heart, Oglala Lakota and Hunkpati Dakota, Pine Ridge Reservation South Dakota
- Sara Brave Heart, Ally
- Megan Heutmaker, Dakota
- Megan Schnitker, Sicangu Lakota, Rosebud Sioux Tribe South Dakota
- Scot Zellmer, Ally
- Susan Arntz, City staff
- Edell Fiedler, City staff
- Mark Konz, City staff
- Paul Vogel, City staff

ADOPTED BY:

Mankato City Council, August 2022

RESOURCES TO LEARN MORE

- Bde Maka Ska
- Blue Earth County Historical Society
- Lower Sioux Indian Community
- Minnesota Historical Society
- Minnesota Humanities Center
 - Bdote Memory Map
 - Why Treaties Matter
- Prairie Island Indian Community
- Native American Council
- Native Governance Center
- Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
- Upper Sioux Community
- U.S. Department of Arts and Culture
- Why Treaties Matter